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According to the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA), twenty-five states, D.C., and over 140 U.S. cities and counties have laws banning or carefully regulating tethering. The states with tethering laws include AZ, CA, CT, DC, DE, FL, HI, IL, IN, LA, MA, ME, MD, MI, MO, NC, NV, OR, PA, RI, TN, TX, VA, VT, and WVA. Georgia does not have a state law banning tethering altogether, but has a myriad of different tethering ordinances depending on which county or city the dog resides.

We are proposing that this potential statute could be positioned as Minnesota Statute 343.41-after 343.40 Dog Houses.

Please consider authoring and/or supporting this bill to help ensure the animal, while tethered, has solid protections in place and we, as state humane agents, in addition to law enforcement professionals, and the public at large, have good language in place to help to assist in the enforcement of the laws for the prevention of wrongs to animals which may now or hereafter exist, and to promote the growth of education and sentiment favorable to the protection of animals.

A bill for an act relating to animals; prohibiting tethering of dogs under certain conditions; providing criminal penalties;

[343.41] TETHERING OF DOGS.

Subd. 1. Definition; Tethering of dogs permitted.

(a) “Tether” means to restrain an animal by tying the animal to an object or structure, including but not limited to a house, tree, fence, post, garage, shed, or clothesline by any means, including but not limited to a chain, rope, cord, leash, or running line.

(b) A person who tethers a dog must provide the dog with:

- (1) a sufficient quantity of good quality, wholesome food and clean water that is safe to drink;
- (2) adequate shelter and protection from any inclement weather;
- (3) veterinary care when necessary to prevent the dog from suffering; and
- (4) humane care and treatment.

Subd. 2. Tethering prohibited.

1. A person must not tether a dog for more than nine hours in a 24-hour period.
2. A person must not tether a dog in a manner likely to cause the dog to become entangled with another animal or object. A tether must be secured to a well-fitted collar or harness by means of a swivel anchor, swivel latch, or other mechanism designed to prevent a dog from becoming entangled.
3. A person must not tether a dog when the dog suffers from a medical condition that would be affected by being tethered.
4. A person must provide shade to a dog that permits the dog to escape the direct rays of the sun while the dog is tethered.
5. A person must not leave a dog outside for longer than 30 minutes when the temperature outside is above 90 degrees Fahrenheit or below 32 degrees Fahrenheit. A person must not leave a dog outside when a weather advisory, warning or watch is issued by a local, state or federal authority or when outside environmental conditions, including but not limited to heat, cold, thunder, lightning, wind, rain, snow, hail, a storm, or other form of inclement weather pose an adverse risk to the health or safety of the dog.
6. A person must not tether a dog in an area with excessive human or animal waste or excrement.
7. A person must not tether a dog if the dog has an open wound or a sore on the dog’s body.

8. A person must not tether a dog or permit a dog to be tethered with a tow or log chain, a choke, a pinch, a prong, or a chain collar.
9. A person must not tether a dog using a chain, rope, cord, leash, running line, or other means, unless the chain, rope, cord, leash, running line, or other means is three feet longer than the length of the dog as measured from the tip of the dog's nose to the base of the dog's tail or ten feet, whichever is longer.
10. A person who tethers a dog must ensure that the tether is not more than one-eighth of the body weight of the dog. The weight of the tether must not unreasonably inhibit the free movement of the dog in the area allowed by the length of the tether.
11. A person must not tether a dog in a manner that would allow the dog to wander onto the property of another person, a public walkway, or a road.

Subd. 3. Exceptions. This section does not prohibit:

1. a person from walking a dog with a hand-held leash;
2. conduct that is directly related to the cultivation of agricultural products, including shepherding or herding cattle or livestock, if the restraint of the dog is reasonable necessary for the safety of the dog;
3. tethering a dog while at an organized and legal event, such as hunting, obedience training, a performance, or law enforcement event, or while working or competing in such an event;
4. restraining a dog in a camping or recreational area when the dog's restraint complies with the camping or recreational area's requirements under federal law, state law, or any local ordinance; or
5. tethering a dog for less than one hour, as is reasonably necessary for the dog or person to complete a temporary task.

Subd. 4. Penalty. A person who fails to comply with any provision of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor. A person convicted of a subsequent violation of this section within five years of a previous violation of this section is guilty of a gross misdemeanor.

Please reference the following Minnesota Statutes for additional language and penalties;

[Sec. 343.40 MN Statutes](#)

[Sec. 343.21 MN Statutes](#)

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